



A SOUVENIR



INCIDENTS, EXPERIENCES AND REFLECTIONS

BY

MARThA A. JOHN.

"He hath showed thee, O, Man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?" Micah.
chap. vi, verse viii.



Eliza John.

FATHER.

Exalted lives have oft been lived,
And beloved (in diverging circles
known)
For godly works in which their lives
had grown
But this dear one was all our own,
In our world

Ours, a wise and true protector,
Looked up to around the family hearth,
A counselor of inestimable worth—
A strength to any home on Earth—
A good father!

He chose the Christian's earnest
ways:
And his example plead unerringly,
"Let others go the way which they
may see
But as for my house, and for me,
We'll serve the Lord."



Sarah H. John.

MOTHER.

With contented trust—unusual sweetness—
Kindest deeds along her path
Our precious mother has lain down
Her time-worn staff!
Now all care with us, and grief severest
We must meet alone!
Rest for the weary, mother dearest,
Where pain's unknown.
In reflection, like a panorama
(We gaze through blind ng tears)
Comes this record now unfolding,
Of ninety years!
Much in life that seemeth dreariest
Recurreth o'er and o'er
But thy peace and joy, mother dearest
Are forever more!
Ah we miss and need thy tender touches
On our silvering hair,
And in the plans of daily life, we miss
Thee everywhere!
True and thoughtful friends, the very
nearest
We cherish tenderly,
Yet mother, oh our mother dearest
None can be like thee!

Spring.

Let pens catch now the melody
Of treasured words we'd sing,
Since out upon the changing sea
Of time, behold the Spring:
What bards keep coming in her train
To burst in pink and green:
She brings such robes for hill and plain
Unknown in Winter's sheen:
There's rose and gold and purple bright
Quivering o'er the sky--
A softer touch to every light
That's streaming from on high:
The bluejays in their w'nter nests
Have heard the distant call--
Preparing now to meet the guests
Of gladness, one and all.
The loved and longed for angel Spring
Is moving hitherward!
Then in the gladsome welecoming
Let there go thitherward
Like incense from the altar rising--
Like sweetness from the bud
Deeds of goodness, kind surprising
And praises unto God!

Jane Grey Swisshelm.

Jane Grey Swisshelm was born in 1815 in Pennsylvania. She was one of the earliest and a most ardent abolitionist. The first abolition meeting ever held in Alleghany county, Pa. was held under the famous sycamore tree on her place. Charles Sumner attended that meeting. She was a journalist of ability, and a leader in the passage of the Homestead law in the western states. She died in 1854 at her old home, Swissvale, in Alleghany county, Pennsylvania.

An unconquerable christian spirit
With tenderness that birthright gave
Was born when Nature crowned with
vital life
This champion for the slave,
This philanthropist and able leader
Where far too few with courage
stand!
But now her powerful pen has fallen
From an untiring hand!
A rambler strayed through tang'ed
seclusions
Searching for themes and relics rare
About her far-famed Swissvale home.
He found
Ruins and strangers there!

He found the reliques—the “sunlighted den”,
Even the sylvan seat, he found
Fronting meadows and amphitheaters
Of distant hills beyond.
But all the beautiful born in Swissvale
Died soul and life with its queen!
And what though the urchins of a
truckman
Deface and mar the scene—
What though her shrubbery and
trailing vines
Are dying out, here and there,
And wornout buildings are tumbling
down,
She'll ne'er awake to care!
Her work, her holy mission is finished
Which helped so much to clear the
way
That a race in bondage might step
forward
That they might all be free!
It is meet that this Scriptural injunc-
tion
Is carved upon her granite slab—
“Speak unto the children of Israel
(So beautifully sad)
Speak unto the children of Israel
That they may go forward” it reads!
O, that all may go forward and upward
Her great example pleads.

Summer.

Resting here in blissfulness
Amidst the June-time showers
Inhaling honied fragrance
Flung from opening flowers—
From blossoms in the grain fields,
And spicy bloom from trees,
We linger as worshipers
Enwrapped in mysteries.
We breathe the sweet elixir
Of Summer's blessed reign,
And through a slumberous sweetness,
And gladness—almost pain
We inhale the delicate
And unutterable love—
The exhilarating freshness
Sent from field and grove.
Opening corols tremble
In a shower bath like dew:
We pluck them in their beauty.
Peerless white and peerless blue,
Each adding to a latent charm
Breaking into new delight.
Flooding every thinking mind

With a hotier light.
 Human minds have failed to measure
 In its fullness, THIS!
 A harmony of anthems,
 An essence draught of bliss,
 Somewhat unknown in language
 And all untouched by hand
 Yet the soul—the silent spirit
 Can understand!

Summer Evening Thoughts.

Listening to the warbling birds
 And pleasant sigh of breeze
 Ascribing praises, (not in words)
 Come hither thoughts like these
 As blessings for this evening hour—
 And Rest, O, in welcome power.

The sultry day with leisure ride,
 And picnic in the grove
 Has passed, with all its loads beside—
 Its idlings and its love—
 Its hopes, its rests, and dreams of the
 young,
 Sweet as carols in vespers sung!

All's over now! And in the charm
 That twilight hours enfold,
 Encircling the quiet farm
 In eve's magnetic hold,
 (A deeping shade and bird's farewell)
 All touch the pen with restless spell.

A mellow pacing in the lanes,
 Of homeward marching kine
 Prefigures of the life that reigns
 Where thrift and peace entwine:
 And whistling at his evening chores
 The boy shuts up the great barn doors.

The milk is strained in ample cans—
 In cool sweet cellars set,
 And all the work for weary hands
 Let us at last forget,
 And rise to where the spirit sees
 A way through unsealed mysteries!

From sunlines, in golden tints and red
 Touching zenith far
 Come whispers (though a word's not
 said)
 Of majesty and power!
 And leaflets on the drooping limbs
 Seem hushed in service— stirred in
 hymns!

The birds have ceased their warbles
 now,
 The sky is set with stars,

And slumber stealing o'er each brow
 Like night on silent hours:
 And night and sleep a welcome guest,
 Call the mind and pen to rest.

Echoes From Kansas

The following lines are founded upon an incident which occurred during the excitement at the time when the new star for Kansas was proposed to be placed upon the "Star Spangled Banner." The people of the south resolved that the new state should come into the Union as a slave state, while the people of the north decreed that it should be wedged to Freedom.

Across the flower-decked prairies
 Of wild though verdant lands
 Along the Osage and Neosho
 And Kansas river sands—
 Crept the blossom-scented breezes—
 Came down the sunlight beams
 Illuming a land of promise
 In bold explorers dreams!
 We were roaming then (mere children)
 Round homes afar away
 Unknowing there should rise *right there*
 A fratricidal fray
 That would unrivet bands that bound
 A weak oppressed race,
 And wasn from off our country's flag
 Its national disgrace!
 Step after step, and year by year
 Our country's pulse beat fast
 Till scarce a hillside home, but heard
 The echoes as they passed.
 Then came one morn in autumn
 In an Ohio town
 When a *train* upon its eastern run
 Had turned its breakers down.
 The steaming, seething engine seemed
 Impatient to move on:
 Coaches were filled with passengers—
 The busy day begun.
 Great political excitements
 Were stirring anxious souls—
 Men discussed the situations
 Disturbing Freedom's polls--
 Those efforts through fraud and riot
 To plant on Kansas plains
 A "peculiar institution"
 To curse where'er it reigns!
 Voters were weighing seriously
 These themes of life or death;
 Women too were listening gravely
 Almost with bated breath
 When the engine's whistle sounded

Its searching, belching blast,
And hasting brakemen slammed the doors
As in and out they passed.
Two active porters climbed the steps.
Bearing most tenderly
A feeble mother, weak with years —
Long life's infirmity!
They bore her to a rear-car.
Each seeming want supplied:
A boy observing every movement
Kept closely by her side.
Watching with keen solicitude
In filial noble ways—
Told their pathetic history
Unminding blame or praise.
This was his father's loving mother —
Mother with palsied hand
Lately come from the Scottish hills —
Their ancestral land —
Came to dwell among her children,
And die among her own,
Passing for this holy purpose
Through all but death alone!
With joyous tears, they welcome her
Into their loving arms —
Protecting love should fondly guard
From all external harms.
Her queer fancies were respected —
Her wishes great and small:
The dear mother should be honored
And gratified in all.
They gave her an easy carriage
With velvet cushions lined,
And two negro maiden servants
Obedient and kind
Yet she drooped in painful sadness
And soon there crossed her mind
A sort of craze unaccountable —
Strange and undefined!
She chose at last the coarsest food
Her sustenance, day by day.
And refused the aid of servants
Almost in every way.
Vainly her children plead with her —
Entreaty all in vain —
And that weary voyage, she plead
To travel back again!
“And she must *gang* back to Scotland
(The little hero said)
My father would *na gang wi* her
So I have come instead.”
That which just had held the people
With a thrill of interest
In far off Kansas, found diversion
Here — the gravest, tenderest!
Helpless age appealing mutely
Unto the hearts of those

Who were watching slow developments
So suddenly disclosed.
The scene was sad and puzzling
And hard for men to read;
“Was there my boy, some *hidden* cause
Of selfishness or greed —
Some trifling, or hapless secret —
Some individual lack
To drive grandma from her kindred
This tedious journey back?”
“None (the earnest grandson answered
In calm straightforward tones)
Only she could *na* breathe for Slavery
She said.” (Its sighs and wrongs!)
“She said she could *na* die in peace
For *bluid* on father's soul.”
Eyes were opened, the truth unveiled
And O, so beautiful.
They seemingly had gazed upon
A poor demented brow;
But suddenly as if translated,
A very angel now!
Instead of palsied lunacy
In tenement of clay
Behold a grand heroic mind
Unclouded as the day.
She could not breathe for Slavery
Where idle comfort lolls.
Nor bear that deep corroding sin
Upon her children's souls!
She would not lend one finger's aid
Her fellow man to blight:
All the children of Our Father — God
Were precious in her sight!
She'd be buried in the kirkyard
Among unsullied graves,
But not in a land that licenses
A bartering in slaves!!
Over thy fair prairies, Kansas
Let soft vespers sweep:
No human chattel is there enchained —
No *slave* is there to weep!
O, sweet homes in Kansas - historic
land
Rising prosperously in view.
May never a wrong that stains a state
Poison the air that kisses you!

Around the Evening Lamp

A farmer's home called our Union
there.
To sew for abandoned babes in a Mis-
sion's care —
To work for helpless waifs in deed and
thought:
Deep interest was to this banquet-
brough

Matrons with little ones amidst us trod
And in sympathy, their own seemed ~~weak~~
to God!

We knew of babes clothed in rags--
sadly knew.
And garments now from busy fingers
flew;
All striving--most substantially to
bless--
To fling a mite, on the sea of Help-
fulness!

One mother called to mind, the Winter
time,
The dreariest, despite displays sub-
lime,
And never welcome as Summer, or the
Spring,
Nor as Autumn, with her leaves in
coloring.
Could there be a difference, in
thoughts like these?
Yet one, who, (with a child upon her
knees)
Paused a moment, then said "I love
Winter."—See
That meant better than times for
bird or bee!
Mentally we saw pictures of her home
In winter evenings, where there may
not come
Disturbances; lamps alight: blinds
drawn down,
All confidence true—*lose* the bright-
est crown!
We seemed to feel in waves, 'invisible,
a truth
In sympathy with her, and fleeting
youth--
Sweet congenial thoughts, and restful
moods
Dear perhaps as wand'ring in a
summer woods!
Yes, tonight, *I* love the Winter too
from burden freed:
Then let's light our evening lamps,
and settle down to read.

Wild Violets.

Watching for violets. We love them—
Their wonderful hues—
Their freshness, sweetness and beauty
In purple and blues:
We find them in hedges' seclusions
Garnering their own
Extract from sunbeams, whose intru-
sions
Glint the osage throne.

It is the freshest blossom of the morn,
Though richer "cloth of gold"
In colors wondrously inborn
Doth pansy's petals hold.
But Violet! Violet! in thy meekness
Evolve thy lessons grand
Since thy existence aid thy sweetness
Touch the Builder's Hand!

To us returns the old enchantment.
Now through memory traced,
When first an idle wand'ring footpriat
Tracked the unplowed waste--
When first we marked the stirring
wonders
Beyond description's pen—
The beauty of this newland's splendors
In Nature's untouched reign.

We saw the graceful deer—unwary
In their pastures green
Galloping over widths of prairie
As king in right, or queen,
Until the plowmen came; beholding
Their new wrought charms—
The wild blown meadows, slowly mold-
ing
Into fruitful farms.

So now like mystic spell uprisen,
Seem these violets drest
With power, calling back a vision
From the long-gone past!
We pluck as then our choice selections
From widely scattered flowers;
Tenderly flow the recollections
Of those precious hours —

Too sweet for oblivion—for consignment
Where coarser moments sleep!
An opening blossom breathes refine-
ment--
A bursting bud can speak—
Or touch the heart with abounding
thoughts
Not selfishly our own!
O, we're thankful for the violets—
For all the joy they've shown.

Pastoral

My friends and I, on a quiet morning--
Following the vernal season's dawn-
ing,
Drove out to greet Spring's angels
flinging
Violas round, and setting birds to
singing—
Calling softly up from the southland
fair
The gentlest, freshest breath of air.

These were hours of leisure sweet,
and we
Came out to prize what'er there was
to see,
Even the herdman's flock, fat and sleek
Browsing in peace along the winding
creek
Where the sward is green, seems
velvety green
In its first new crop to ting the scene.
And as we drank these living visions
in,
We called to mind once more a far
off scene--
The semblance of a thoughtful shepherd
lad,
In the famous coat of many colors
clad,
And wandering alone in Sheekhem's
field
In pastures worn--perhaps untilled.
He strode trustfully on to an uncon-
scious fate--
This great young dreamer, from a
low estate
While a preparing Hand in holy grace
Led him step by step to his honored
place,
Impressing us that through *worth* alone
Are the chosen of Jehovah known.
Sing birds among these Whiteside
county farms:
These meadow lands are dressed in
vernal charms,
The willows' and maples' twigs are all
alive
With sweet suggestions for our
splendid drive:
Sing birds, bloom plants: we see and
hear and feel
A share of what these all reveal.

A Drive to Town

Leisurely we drove away
Through the autumn scenes of a rest-
ful day
Taking the child from his happy play
To a town by the river.
Slowly jogged our beast along--
(*Slow to be sure*, but physically strong)
Through lanes where the wild bird
learned its song
Of praise unto the Giver!
Between hedgerows, green with
leaves

Our road-way lay, and amongst the
trees
Where the turtle dove in sadness
grieves
Anear her guarded nest.

We passed vervains dressed in blue
And purple asters starring miles of
view--

Blossoms which my little comrade
knew--

A roadside gaily drest!

All so fresh and newly made,
So perfect in every tint arrayed:

"Who sowed them (the darling baby
said)

This one, and this and that?"

Who sowed them? my own thoughts
rise,

Except the Hand that planned the
arching skies

And built the world with our destinies
Beyond our divining--

That gave unto clay, a soul
To read and interpret the beautiful,
And keep unmarred, as priceless jewel
The casket ever shining.

We entered the market town
Where the road-way flowers are trod-
den down

That sometimes uplift a puny crown--
A weak--a brief expansion!

We noticed hurrying feet
Crowding along the busy market street
To bustling shops, stores, or home re-
treat,

Be it cot or mansion.

All these varied scenes among,
The boy keeps saying as we drive along
"Tell me auntie, where these boys be-
long
Anu whither are they going?"

My own thoughts keep asking too,
Do they all belong to the just and true
In the varied lines which they pursue--
Their deeds--their sowing?

Here are crowded marts, with men
Handling O. thousands of bushels of
grain

Gathered from the country--hill and
plain

In careful keeping:

Merchants with useful wares
All seemingly absorbed in business
cares

To which farm and town alike are heirs
In continual meeting—
Meeting on one common plain
To which the high and low must all
attain,
The human need of fruit and grain
That every farm's displaying.
O, back again from city noise—
Back to the quiet home my heart
enjoys:
The baby picks up his laid down toys
And he resumes his playing.
1882.

A Trilobite

An honest visitor
Earnestly aroused—awakened, sat
In a Relic Gatherer's cabinet;
And he carefully took
And held a seeming pebble to the
light:
“O that is nothing but a trilobite
Struck from a common rock
(Said the Relic Gatherer)
But here is a jewel of ancient art,
Whose strange history let me im-
part—
A worthy theme for thought!
See, it is a ring of solid gold,
Designed in figures curious, old,
And mark, how finely wrought!
It is no modern jewel—
‘Twas stripped from the finger of one,
who
For seventeen long centuries through
In buried palace sat
At rest, in costly embellished room
That proved, alas! the pitiful tomb
Of the desolate!
It was brought from Pompeii!
Examine it well: pause and think:
What terror for those upon the brink
Of that awful hour,
When helpless, trembling, pale with
fear
They beheld the molten lava near
In ruthless power!
Like feathers in the blast
Were poor man's frail efforts feebly
plied;
Terrific quakes of the Earth replied,
The molten stream rolled in!
The wondrous city was buried deep
In undisturbed—in dreamless sleep—
Its wisdom and its sin!

Seventeen hundred years!
The curious eyes of this late day
Now pry into the *passed away*,
Unveiling—bringing forth.
Thoughtfully we gaze on solemn forms
Whose ears have long unheard the
storms
That rock and stir the earth!
Weariest thou of this?
Then come hither into this hall,
View stranger relic, surpassing all
We have yet displayed;
Prepare for wonder! let nerves be
calmed;
A *human mummy*: preserved—embalm-
ed
In Egypt's catacomb laid!
Unfold these wrappings; lo
These feet perhaps trod hillsides green
While yet the holy Nazarene
In vocal accents taught:
While Jerusalem was yet in youth
Afraid to hear the living truth
That dieth not.”
The trembling answer came
“But give, give me, pray another sight
Of that seeming stone—that *trilobite*
Let us gaze on it:
Dear friend, deem me not of careless
mind,
Nor believe alas, that I am blind
In wonder's cabinet!
But that remoter era!!
Bring me relics from the first creation
Wrungr out from earth's deep founda-
tion
Ere was formed a plan
Of the beautiful, fit dwelling place
Upon this wide world's ungainly face
For mortal man.
“Nothing but a trilobite!!!”
Why, before Pompeii's streets were
laid—
Long before the catacombs were made
This relic, *was*!
The Builder of the world was there
And spread his footprints everywhere,
And wrote his laws!
This petrified form—
These little fossils—granite blocks
Struck from the deep foundation rocks
By quarry-men's sledge
Are very old! no reckoning true
Can ever guide an idea to
Their marvelous age!
1852.

In Autumn

We walk abroad in sheltered ways
 To breathe the spirit of these days—
 To understand the noiseless strokes
 That mark our maples and our oaks,
 That glint with gold where hickory
 reigns
 And crimson all the sumac lanes.
 Welcome Autumn, with unspent tears
 Locked somewhere in thy marching
 years,
 Imparting sadness to the land and air
 Which all our spirits learn to wear!
 But new-born life of winter rye
 Just catching now the delighted eye,
 Sends out its freshness far and near
 With beauty for the waning year:
 While cornfields gray, perhaps our
 pride,
 Outspread across this country wide
 Are wonderful in charms and cheers
 In rustling, drooping *bursting* ears!
 And how they strike with tones of song
 Every breeze that floats along.
 The corn squirrel in fur covering
 Which in the early days of Spring
 Dug the corn from many a hill
 Is stealing from the farmer still;
 But no one minds him now, for see
 There is plenty for such rogues as
 he—
 And some to spare, now and then—
 Luscious meals for the prairie hen,
 And jay and quail (on plenty's plains)
 That gather up the wasting grains!
 Seldom were gems on Autumn's brow,
 Richer than her gifts are now:
 Orchards outdo in offering
 Their gracious promise of the spring.
 Strewing in profusion sweet
 A great abundance at our feet:
 And acorns in their coats of brown
 In quiet groves are rattling down:
 Each insect by the season stirred
 Is vying with the happy bird.
 All nature rich in Heaven's care
 Is grander in this bracing air:
 All kingdoms of their treasures give
 That needy child of earth may live:
 Changing tints for the eye to see,
 And *all this good for such as we!*
 O, in the spirit's strange unrest,
 Let this gladness be expressed,
 Let tongues reveal the free-gift sight—
 And we too take our pens and write!

We strive to paint on humble scrolls
 Of worship that arrests our souls
 Of beams, from which the cloud is
 brushed
 Of nature with the tumult hushed—
 Of goodness on our pathway shed,
 Of blessings on the reverent head!
 O, how can heart refuse its praise
 How rest we thus in careless ways
 In scenes of gladness—rural grace
 In land of plenty, and in peace?
 1883.

Autumn Leaves

Sweet voiced pedestrians
 Pass up the roadside street.
 Picking here and there a wondrous leaf
 That flutters to their feet.
 Blossom time is over
 The scene around is new
 Brilliant tintings, in changing color
 Are lifted to their view.
 Autumn and children meet—
 Children in *their* Spring,
 Brushing from their paths, with little
 feet
 A leafy carpeting!
 Springtime in *their* lives
 But *Autumn* in the year!
 And these pictures which this one day
 gives
 Are adding to its cheer.

Friends' Meeting House

(At Shamokin, Pa.)

We are trudging up a rocky path just
 now—
 (In reminiscent mood)
 A granite path that leads us on and
 through
 A quiet hillside wood.
 We move along in restful calm content,
 And kneeling, serape aside
 Brown leaves, dead and brittle, to find
 a plant
 To us "out west" denied.
 It is the checker berry—"winter
 green"
 Pressed closely to the ground.
 And is neglected never when it's seen
 In haunts where it is found.
 O, interesting path—at the summit
 stands—
 For many years has stood
 The unpretending Meeting House of
 Friends

A near the shady wood.
Evenings alone in the twilight hour
(The day's deep thinking time)
I return to those grounds, and to our
Old Home (in mind) *yet mine*.

Benevolence

Like, with holy oil anointed,
Soothing human grief,
Moves the hand that's God-appointed
In benevolent relief.

And wonderful, that to the giver
The richest blessings flow,
Uplifting helper and receiver
In the special overflow

Of human kindness – tenderness –
The round of greed, above:
Portraying in truth, a kinship with
Our Savior's love.

Giving Thanks

Now therefore our God we thank thee, and praise thy glorious name.
I Chronicles, chap. 29, verse 13.

A devoted, discouraged mother
In cheer (all outward) led
A little group of hungry children
Half supperless, to bed!

She lingered there beside her darlings.
With tears kept bravely down –
Told them of other needy children
(More wretched than her own)

Sleeping beneath some sheltering door-way

Or in some wind-swept hall,
Clad too thin for the chilly weather,
With no supper at all!

Thus her listening group, grew thankful
For blessings meager – sweet!
Oh amidst the world's thanksgivings
Patmos and praises meet.

The Snow Finch

Ah, the air is growing colder –
Is full of gloomy haze;
A threat of storm is in the sky,
Complaint on ev'ry breeze;
And look for snow, in answer
Unto the glory call:
Perhaps in early evening
The soft white clouds will fall.

The finches flew in flocks to-day
(With fluttering notes of glee)
Like raindrops hailing through the hedge,
Or windstorm in the tree,
And singing (was it?) through the air
The notes their needs invite,
Hearing perhaps in upper waves
The storm reserved for night!

For night! And with gathering darkness
What messages float by
With the whistling boreal blast
In melancholy cry!
Are all the creatures in our caring
In pity sheltered warm?
Home fowls, kine, and faithful Dick,
For hear the fretting storm!

How it grumbles o'er the prairies,
And moans around the door:
Come closer to the stove, sweet ones
While lonely night winds roar.
Where now is the winsome snowbird –
Where rests his little wing?
Dear child, our Father careth
For the little trusting thing.

The Closing Year

Let us not be as the unthankful are
Who give no praise!
We are bidding adieu to the grand Old Year
That is passing away in the Winter drear!
But see, there are garlands around his bier
For the crowning of the worthy, and hear
What he says.

He is leaving to the faithful, a memory
Of things well done;
A wonderful content for spirits pure –
For hearts that are rich in joys that endure;
O, life, built on the rock that stands secure
With a rest, unknown to the evil-doer –
This heritage won.

He is leaving abundance throughout
our land
And peace on these shores!
His harvests waved in the freshness of light --
Were wreathed in promises hopefully bright –
They yielded (with Industry ordered aright)
The garners of treasure, beautiful sight
In bountiful stores!

His orchards on prairie and hillside
slopes
Bent with blessings down:
While the gladdening and the chang-
ing view
With pencilings of sunshine streaming
through
Gave visions of grandeur, and sweet
and new,
Fruit tinted and glinted with golden
hue
And russet and brown.

His wild plants too that were scattered
abroad
In the hedge and the nook
Kept beckoning lovers out in the breeze
Throu' landscapes fair with flowers
and trees—
With sweets for more than the birds
and the bees:
What lessons were studied and read
from these
In nature's book.

Then let us not go up as the thankless
do
To the New Year's morn!
There are deeds to do. Each act up-
raises,
Or takes from the soul its noblest
graces;
Accords the heart to its highest praises
Or *drowns* it deep in the world's wide
mazes
Poor, forlorn!

Then as the Old Year glides under the
stars—
Out at the western door.
And the New comes in from the realms
of rest—
Comes in through tears of the morning
mist.
Let us, *let us* see that our lives be blest
With the joy and peace that will last
and last
Forevermore!

A Winter Storm

Last night in fitful wakeful rest
We listened to the house dog's cries.
The wind kept wailing from the west
In sullen sobs and sighs.
But morning breaks with clouds of
snow
Swirling and sweeping with the
breeze.
The weather gauge is falling low—
Descending by degrees.

All Nature feels the sudden change —
The winter's natural call
Screaming over our prairie plains
In breathings masterful.

Let sparrows roost in barns to-night
Thoughtless boys at your common
chores:
They come with chirps in half allright
Behind the banging doors.

Learn by our own need of Higher Care!
Let your protecting hands extend
In merciful kindness everywhere
Where weakness needs a friend.

The Wild Hen

A vernal morning is gladly breaking
In mellow sound
From unseen altars, and awaking
Through fields around
(Till heart and ear hath caught the
essence
Afar and dim)
A wild bird's joy—its effervescence —
Its morning hymn!
Over the boundless prairies boomng.
Nor harsh, nor strong
But heralding angels, coming
With hope and song —
With treasures of bud and blossoming:
New life begins!
Sing wild hen, for Sol is loosening
The winter chains!
Sing, sing! Coo out thy glad existence.
Thy wild life wants,
And taste the kernal (sweet subsis-
tence)
In joyous haunts:
But hush, oh hush! Thy glad voice
stifle —
It was *too* sweet!
A hand has grasped the cruel rifle.
And restless feet
Tread thither! Oh wild birds feeding
In your ranging run.
So beautiful and all unheeding
The sportsman's gun!
A boy returns from the vanquished
field
In unconcern!
But frightened birds that his rifle
killed
To accusers turn.

Inebriety

Within a marble-bounded lawn
And bathed in sunset gleams like gold
Two young maidens slowly strolled.
How restful seemed the promenade,
For who could push the closed door
To read a guarded sorrow o'er?
All in sweetness like the flowers
Were they to me—the sisters there
With sunset glintings through their hair.
Neighbors knew that tottering steps
Oft crossed the lawn at eventide
But what cared they to know beside?
At last we knew the curse of wine
Hovered around and over them
Like snapping flowers from a stem!
Mother and children wept alone
And uncomplaining, lest a stain
Molest the honored fam'ly name,
Both held the tired mother's hands
While the elder, more fragile girl
Paler grew—more spiritual!
And more quiet and more resigned
As dews distilled from angel wings
Athwart a heart's unmurmurings.
Ah, the new—the new—Jerusalem!
A mother kneels beside a bed,
Her arm beneath a loved one's head.
A wine lost father totters near;
She turns *from him*, a troubled brow—
This first-born darling *passing now!*
A soul disrobing for its rest;
Hush, catch the whisper, low and sad,
"I'm going, O, O, I'm so glad."

The Beer Cup

Over to the grove land, this morning—
The tall bright trees among
Where wonderful leaves, in adorning
Beckoned and lured us along,
We drove, with spirits enchanted
In the glory that fills,
Or pervades the air, sweet scented
Which Autumn distills:
Spread out before us, what greenery
In rye field robes to-day,
What snatches of beauty—of scenery
In its dreaminess lay:
There were stars of purple in masses—
And all fringing the stream:
O Jordan, what kingdoms it passes,
And what pastures outgleam;

What gardens and houses in-woven
With creepers and vines:
See too, how the sunbeam is golden
In the leaf where it shines!
And see in the midst of this sweetness
Seems charmed into life
A neat little home in its greatness!
But listen! There's strife!
Then oh what availeth this beauty
Around and above
Where nothing seems wakened to
duty—
Nothing wanting but love!
The lord of the home in his potions
Is starving his soul!
He boweth his head in devotions
To the maddening bowl!

Appledore

Celia Thaxter, the author, died at Appledore, Isle of Shoals, aged 58 years. She was born in 1836 at Portsmouth N. H. She was the daughter of Thomas H. Laighton, and at the age of 16 married her guardian Levi L. Thaxter. Since his death she lived at Appledore.

Most tenderly we search for Appledore
A little island in the stormy sea;
A history's woven on that lonely shore
With living thoughts and deeds.
We scan them o'er
Most tenderly.

On solid earth the hums of restless care
In shop and mill, rolled safely
through the night;
While on the rocks, climbing a light-
house stair
A fearless girl for years, sent out
from there
A warning light.

And like a saving light that poet mind
(Though passed from Earth) in silent
power
Is sending still, in written words un-
dimmed
A help, like from the lamps she
nightly trimmed
At Appledore!

Illumination

There came to us a season of mists with
rains—
A weary continuance of dullness;
All the frost-bitten herbage over the
plains

Sleazy and wet. Discomfort in fullness!
 But behold the mists are all risen: and lo,
 The darkened lowering clouds are broken
 And springing to his feet, impatient to go
 A chore lad like a prophet has spoken!
 He gazed for a while on the light outspread
 And on the beauty that Nature was voicing,
 Then lifted his hat to a reverent head
 And went out into sunlight, rejoicing.
 We had not thought, in his ordinary face—
 Only ordinary care disclosing,
 That all of a sudden, we are led to trace
 A divinity there, reposing!
 Words are too weak to express (his manner said)
 The heights and the depths of this feeling:
 O, grand is the spirit, that thus can be fed
 With the glory that God is revealing!

Adams

She had passed, we knew, the youth of her days,
 A matron unlearned, uncouth in her ways;
 Her hair was white with the burden of years—
 Of toil unremitting—worrying cares!
 Her garb not fashioned for beauty and grace
 Developeu no charm to her vacant face.
 This was Adams. The sad picture is true
 Of a traveler treading a life-time through
 On to the end! Oh rudderless, drifting--
 Passing her years with no uplifting—
 No thought of duty—no ennobling aim
 To deepen a Soul's enjoyment in Time!
 We thought her heartless—a lover of strife.
 But we were too young to study her life—
 Too young to analyze Adams—her law,
 The exterior was the garb we saw.

But now in review—looking over that ground
 Many an excuse for her deeds are found.
 There was withal, in surroundings so rude
 A gleam of sunshine, of beauty and good.
 We remember once, as a neighbor passed
 Her low deep window, how he was impressed
 By the whiteness of her clean ruffled cap
 And open Bible spread out on her lap.
 Searching for divinity all alone,
 Lifting her voice in an audible tone
 In the tongue of her people over the sea
 As if Goodness were struggling for mastery!
 As if dark clouds she were brushing aside
 For a glimpse of God, to none denied!
 That one hour seemed holy, but through the week
 Dreadful sometimes were the words she would speak!
 Strange contradictions! Ah little she knew,
 But unto that little, perhaps she was true.
 Reviewing those weaknesses now, that strife
 We study in pity, the threads of her life!
 We recall her garden: its pickets were set
 In the heart of a meadow with dew drops wet,
 And the pathway there from the hard road seen
 Was brightly fringed with the meadow's green;
 And once we rejoiced as she bade us wait,
 And guided us up to the garden gate
 And pushed it ajar. O plain to be seen
 Among her own flowers, she was the queen!
 What a study! A garden beautiful
 Wrought by her loving care—untiring toil.
 Can a soul be base, though weak in saintly powers
 That can love and toil for the sake of flowers?

Rural Blessings

Far out in the country, in a quiet dell
 A family of children were wont to dwell;
 They knew most of the birds of every name
 That each new year with the mellow spring time came;
 They sang with them, and hummed with the pretty bees,
 And they watched the first blossoms crowning the trees:
 They knew of the tilling of garden and farm
 Where the sweetness of sunshine was nestling warm:
 When the June cherry on the margin of streams
 And scented Gaultheria in pine wood scenes,
 And the purple heath fruit in mountain dew
 Were ready to yield their abundance, they knew:
 They knew too when the nuts on the hills should stir
 And the tall chestnut should burst its prickly bur.
 But all through the lovely springtime's blushing reign
 And all through the summer's blooming, waving grain
 Their busy hands grew hard with toil: and they
 Paused at the close of a sultry weary day
 To see a guest from the distant city—fair—
 So free he seemed from their familiar care!
 Could a visitor now, our eyes behold
 Step down from mystic streets inlaid with gold
 No greater nor wiser could possibly seem
 Than this strange guest, in children's simple dream.
 But long strong years have flown, and these have told
 How that city with its streets as rich as gold
 Is tethered by a tie of needs and charms
 To the far off country with its prosperous farms!
 And city and country—the dwellers there-of
 O, are bound by a tie, a duty, a love
 Holier and sweeter than mortal can give
 And near to this Ruler, the reverent live.

The Old Liberty Bell

The old Liberty Bell that has been in Independence Hall in Philadelphia since 1753, has been out of use since 1835, it having been cracked. When sent to the World's Fair at Chicago in 1893 it was accompanied by four policemen whose business it was to take charge of it until its return to Philadelphia.

We passed with the multitude in at the gate
 Of the new "White City" that was reared of late
 Like a nestling thing
 In Chicago's arms; and we wondering went
 To meet what the far-off nations had lent
 Useful—interesting.
 We almost closed our eyes, sometimes, in pain;
 There seemed too much for the alert, but tired brain
 To fully realize;
 People of whom we had only known in books
 Now stood full in life, with strangest ways and looks
 Before our eyes.
 Yet in the midst of all, it is queer to tell
 That we lingered long beside a cracked old bell
 That rings no more:
 The secret it clanged the possibility Of each and every future state to be
 On Columbia's shore.
 Surely, had its strength held on, there would have rung
 In clarion tones, from its historic tongue
 Peal after peal
 A notice of Lincoln's glorious decree
 Which set the American bondmen free!
 A stroke so grand! Old Bell!
 And there's another blight, a scourge, a curse
 Dominating o'er our happy land, and worse—
 Over all lands behold!
 O, when can new *Liberty Bells* ring and ring
 To announce that Alcohol's no longer king
 But is righteously controlled!
 1893.

Among the Native Wild Flowers

Surrounded by fruitful lands—by farms well-tilled
 There lays in the sunshine, a wonderful field--
 Wonderful, since never a plowshare's been known
 To have turned the sod down—unplowed—unmown!
 It is a farmer's green pasture, and though sweet,
 Was reserved to be trodden by ranging feet;
 And hither we rambled, and knowingly met
 This primeval meadow, which Heaven's hand hath set
 With native flowers. O, the beauty and grace
 Decorating with glory, this lonely place:
 In seclusions, they tremblingly stand—
 These old-time flowers of the prairie land.
 Herds of kine go tramping o'er the blossom beds—!
 Crushed violets lift in tears, poor mangled heads;
 But despite the careless hoof, and munching bite,
 Millions yet match the skies, in softening light.
 Then too, the American cowslip's here—the *Shooting Star*
 With pendant, drooping blooms; how lovely they are!
 Tender and delicate, and as pure as Truth—
 Encircled around, entwined with our youth—
 With the days we go back to, into the past!
 O, flowers that no hand planted—no hand dressed
 None but the mighty Word that called them to blow
 Richer than the glory that Solomon knew.

The Little Estray

Crowds of people have all trooped by,
 Leaving loneliness complete—
 Only this little stray *cur*, and I
 The veils of night to meet!

But the clear moonlight in its blessed calm
 Was never lovelier:
 And the heavy shadows, where I am Creep to the open door.
 A low snatch of song across the meadows
 From some belated boy Grows fainter as the traveler goes
 To his employ.
 But not alone: angels my ways attend:
 There's solace in that thought:
 But who'll care for this, my canine friend
 Thus strangely hither brought?
 I look upward with happy trustful mind Safe in Higher Power,
 While here at my feet, to-night, I find A friend—a little lower—
 Gazing up with watchful earnest eyes, Mute pleadings for a crust!
 And can an answered prayer for me arise
 If I refuse this trust?

Singing at Sunrise

Slow and sleepily and unrested
 Rising from a cozy bed
 I saw a morning in grandeur vested Ere the night was fled:
 The world seemed new in shadowy keeping
 With unfamiliar scenes,
 And there was yet an hour for sleeping For others—in dreams.
 But see! I saw the daylight breaking
 Forth from the reddening east
 And O, enjoyed the great awakening
 For man, fowl and beast.
 A flock of birds flew from the hedge—
 Settled on a pasture bar:
 Praising songs burst from that humble stage,
 And I was auditor.

May

Earth's canopy is robed in blue,
 Celestial grandeur pressing through:
 No hint of cloud is on the sky
 And only sunlight sparkles by,
 In cognizance of dewy gems
 That rests on grass as diadems:
 Through bloom and fragrance breaks this day—
 This one sweet, peaceful morn in May.

Her breath where'er 'tis floating up
Has dipped into some chaliced cup—
Has kissed the sweets from bursting
 buds

Along the hedges—in the woods,
And offers now no joy more sweet
To bathe the brow and lip and cheek—
An offering in morning's hour
Of nectar bath from opening flower.

And angels flying hither—see—
With blossoms for the budding tree—
With verdure for the harrowed plain,
Blessing all the May time reign,
Be it flower, or be it field
With sunlit promise of the yield,
Be it orchard in flush of bloom
Or thicket with its wild perfume—

Be it young life in shifting scene—
The colt and calf in pasture green;
Be it bird with plumage bright,
Or sober gray that meets the sight,
Each dowered with a ray divine
That God permits on earth to shine:
All lead us on to understand
The movement of a Perfect Hand!

No pen can write these blessings out
Strewed here and there, and round
 about;

Then catch them heart, or soul or eye
Ere all these fleeting graces die—
O, catch and hold and *live* these charms
The glories of our farmers' farms—
Shimmering leaves—meadows—grain-fields—all

Ere they are gone beyond recall!

Let's breathe this essence breath-divine.

For through it all doth goodness shine;
Enjoy in full this scented air—
A fragrance that is floating there
Until the soul of song be told,
Until the spirit be controlled,
Arising like this wondrous air
In song, in praise, in prayer.

A Sonnet for June

Awake my harp, thy strings attune
And warble now, the lays of June;
Call in from cloud and sky and air
 A touch of wonder roaming there;
O, seal with *pen* this loveliness
Before the fleeting splendors pass;
Grasp a sense of the waving rye,
 And the barley ere its beauties die!
O, bird, and song, and fruit and bloom
Crowded in this month of June!

All through the vaulted space above
Outshining, fleecy cloud drifts move
Over—over, in masses rolled—
 Seem sporting with the great sun's
 gold,

Basking in light, to us appears
 Until they shed their freight of tears,
Binding fast in glorious glow
 Tender clasps for the arching bow!
O, hail beauteous promise, thrown
 Across the lovely skies of June.

There's the brown bird, and how he
 flies—

The song thrush with his melodies;
He clothes, (it seemeth so sometimes)
 That song with sounds of fairer
 climes,

Wafting along through purple air,
 A strange to woe, astrange to care,
Lulling in peace, the ear, the heart,
 So free from every jar of art
And fresh with every trill and tune
 Trembling in the joys of June.

Amid the foliage, rich and green,
 Of the cherry, (now our queen)
And peeping out like bashful eyes
 Within the midst of mysteries
The juicy red ripe fruitage glows,
 As the mewing catbird knows,
Dangling on some distant limb
 One half in hope, and half in hymn.
O, birds take now your luscious boon
 Ripening in the suns of June.

There too are rare plants in the lanes
 Where first the sweet wild rosebud
 reigns

And where wee blossoms in the path
 Are sweet as any garden bath:
While maidens in their evening stroll
 Are coming home with baskets full,
With rapturous tales of golden shades,
 And wondrous blue in grassy glades,
Of pearly white, and dark maroon
 All in this joyous month of June.

Oh dear great Hand, that made them
 all

 And blest the world so beautiful;
Remove the *veil* from blinded eyes
 That in the way of Progress lies:
Teach hearts to see this lovely Light,
 This goodness, so serenely bright,
And lift the weak all strife above
 Into the fullness of Thy love
To life that's life. Such glory shown
 As figured through one day in June.

Spare the Birds

A beautiful pigeon (ranked with the dove)
 In nest making skilled,
 Is busily building, we believe
 Where we would, she should build.
 Her pinions, are they grey, or are they blue,
 Or a mingling of both—
 With a glimmering of bronze at times
 In the pluming growth?
 Bird beautiful and time-honored-be-loved
 Such as Noah sent forth—
 And later, the carrier from *Nansen*
 In the drear icy north.
 A sportsman went to a shooting last week—
 A game he surely loves!
 He carried a cage of imprisoned birds:
 We fear they all were doves!
 Their presence in our midst is peace—
peace—
 A peace to understand:
 And in their innocence, they seem
 So near the Maker's Hand!
 What if the needless misery that stains
 Breast of the bleeding dove,
 Should place a check on the ruthless hand
 With a scar for the heart of love?

My Thrush

Great wide fields of tasseling maize
 A promise richly sown,
 Are offering to the admiring gaze
 A beauty all their own.
 We watch the graceful stamened top—
 We note the silken hair
 And see (though slowly creeping up
 and up)
 Life for a golden ear.
 All these we value, deeply stirred
 Among such gifts of green:
 We see the butterfly, the bee and bird
 Commingling in the scene.
 Peace and trust; love and happiness
 Form canopies around
 A foretaste see of perpetual bliss—
 A step on holy ground.
 But our surroundings change. Oh Time!
 Will ours be cloud, or sky?
 We're in the midst of things so pure—
 sublime

But now we hear a cry!
 Already there is suffering!!
 Ah from the willow's bough
 My brown thrush has fallen that came
 to sing
 A happy bird till now!
 This wounded pet a child brings in
 (Some neighbor shot in fun)
 In smothered tears our eyes survey the
 sin
 To him a thoughtless one!
 What ails the sense that can enjoy
 Such *needless* suffering?
 Only a bird that some one's boy
 Brought down with broken wing!

Along the Buffalo

In the pleasantest part of June
 We sauntered there one afternoon;
 We *four* sat down upon a rock
 While round us romped our little flock
 Of children, restless, laughing, gay
 In childhood's bright unclouded play:
 O, keen enjoyment—unawares
 With happiness so truly theirs:
 They picked the pebbles from the brook
 And all their hands could hold they
 took—
 Espied in water, slightly bent,
 The pearly bloom of an arrow-plant—
 Reaching for it with merry cries,
 They snapped it off—a rare surprise.
 Then they strovē for the lily stem
 That safely held his cap from them
 Quivering like a golden boat.
 Upon the quiet Dam afloat!
 O, young life, tramping o'er the bluff
 With prattle, song and shout enough,
 And romp, and race!—Our little flock
 Wearily return to us—upon the rock!
 We sat and watched them (thoughtful,
 grave)
 With garnet fragments splash the wave.
 But thought of scenes that interpose—
 (Enacted ere *their* suns arose)
 Between the *then* and *now* whose light
 Is fresh again before the sight.
 In retrospect, we two returned
 To where those winter visions burned
 In record strong—indelible
 Upon the tablet of the soul.
 That fierce winter in all its charms
 With months of snow borne in his arms
 Came down on wings of fleecy white
 And drifted to our dell at night:
 It barred *without*, the great world's din.
 And shut us quiet inmates, *in*!

But in exchange of thought, our band
Found riches rare at its command;
With Fremont in his aims and hopes
We climbed with him, the mountain
slopes

And on the calm Pacific strand,
Seemed at times with him to stand,
Exploring canons—trails—seeing
What stirred and thrilled a great ex-
plorer's being.

But Time wore on—the Volume
through,

A thirst awoke for something new:
Then came postman (fresh interest)
A long delayed and weary guest.
What tidings, as the mail-bag whirled
He brought us from the outside world;
New thought came in, like fresh repast
But the winter time grew *long*, at last
We learned to watch for meteors,
And often heard the storm's guitars:
And strange what zest a wolf's wild
bark

Can throw into the midnight dark;
Eyes peered through the gathering
storm

For a single glimpse of his shaggy
form

But the hungry whelp, he went his
way—

Was gone before the break of day!
At last, at last, in our cozy home
We longed for the first dear signs of
the Spring to come.

One eve we marked as the sun sank low
A rosier tint on his pathway glow,
And higher in heaven, his circle lay
As he rose to climb the skies next day;
The blue jay screamed with a shriller
start

And the frost let go the streamlet's
heart:

The snows uncapped the bluff bank
brow,
And dripped to the sleepy pools below;
From ample roof, and from window
blinds—

Dropped melting mass like crystal
gems:

O, 'ere we thought, the Spring's sweet
spell

Came creeping down our lovely dell—
Nursing beneath the sunniest sod
Hepatica's pale impatient bud—
That flushed in bloom, a keen surprise
Amidst the Winter's last goodbys!
The meadow then, where the icy sheen

Had lain so long, assumed its green,
And welcomed soon, with a loving hold
The cowslips in their robes of gold!

O, day by day so rapidly—
There seemed no end of things to see;
Such new strange plants of every shade
Starring afresh the long neglected
glade;

And new strange trees (now known so
well)

Hung out their catkins in the dell;
The wind flowers came, and lost their
white

As cypripediums burst in sight;
While overhead, from bough to bough
Wild vines kept weaving through and
through

Their fleecy threads on the wildwood
loom

With all their graceful louts in bloom.
Prairies through centuries of sleep
With undeveloped wealth—treasures
deep

Lay spread out around—beautiful—
Subduing heart—refining soul!

And welcome, welcome, all that's good
Let progress stand where waste once
stood

Let wheat fields wave—let corn be
grown

Where only tangled grass was known
And as the years go fleeting past
Remember this, we've loved them all,
the first and last.

Invalid Life

In from the fields, and from lowlands
fair—

In from the fragrance of summery air,
We sat down one day in a restful chair
By an invalid's side!

Our minds seemed out in the meadows
green—

In the midst of gladness where we had
been

And our hearts were full of the things
we had seen

And heard and enjoyed!

Oh, oh (thought we sitting by her side)
Is every good from that head denied,
Pressing the pillow from side to side
In restless dream!

Never a tread through the ample yard—
Never a footstep on the grassy sward,
Only a bed, but firm faith in the Lord—
A reliance on Him!

Sad thinking beamed from those lustrous eyes
In questioning, and pondering replies,
How soothing that tender memories
Came thronging on.

"Out through this window (she said)
afar
Over fields of grain—and how lovely
they are
I see visions of beauty sweet and fair
As in years agone!"

Near her stood a vase with fresh supplies —
With blossoms sweet—of the deepest dyes,
She saw our glance, and there came to her eyes
A mist of tears!

"These are tokens of sympathy and hope,
And each little petal in chaliced cup
Lifts a message of blessing—comfort up
Though unawares —

To dear *givers*, as well as to me."
None do a kindness, we're learning to see
But *they too drink of that*, (that's offered free
As a fountain of light.)

All those who strive for another's gain—
To relieve and soften sadness—pain.
Grow nearer like Him, whose angels reign
In Rest and Right.

Visiting the Old Home Valleys

Why should the romanee of common life
Ordinary in its peace and strife
Cling to the memory (tempest tossed)
When much that we'd keep and hold,
is lost?

It must be for a purpose, displayed—
The changing contrasts of light and shade!

Just now in review, how strange it seems

That one forgotten, so fills these dreams,

One like the oak, whose hist'ry is found
Rooted figuratively in the ground,
Plodding through daily toil, o'er and o'er

As she did for years and years before
In patient rounds.

After years of wand'ring and sojourn,
To these valleys we once more return
To where in happy, though by-gone days,

We watched the resinous pine-knots blaze

Upon the flag-stone hearth. Even then
Our neighbor *Sophie* seemed old as when

(That is in her ways) we find her now.
Deep worn wrinkles on her sun-tanned brow.

We met her as one day we drove
Upon the highway, down the hills we love,

Smiling as she tugged her grocery load
Afoot, on the old familiar road:
The high noon sun with blistering heat
Burned the red shale earth about her feet

Where she stood.

Meeting her thus is what made it seem
As though *twenty years* were but a dream:

That we were back again with tears
and smiles,
Back in Time as well as back in miles!
But the gentle hands that here we press,

And eyes suffused with tenderness
Ignore the changes on brow and hair
Though the full receipts are written there!

Like halos of beauty round us tbrown
Is the *love* that we have always known,
So true, so sweet, unsullied as day
Which Time in his flight snatched not away,

But left it, sweetest jewel of all
When he took our youth beyond recall
And streaked our locks in gray!

Hallowed memories, these valleys hold—
Countless charms to us they yet unfold.
Here glides Roaring creek, still hem-lock-hedged

Whose channel romantic—granite-ledged

Continues dark in its thick damp shade
Verging among spruces down the glade.
Where a long-time friend in loneliness
(She unconscious of isolation was)
Dwelt amidst sublimities divine:
Her life happier perhaps than mine!
Let's hold once more in memory's power

The fullest sweetness of this hour:
Let the mountain breeze our temples lave

With holy goodness like a wave
In Summer shower.

We have trod o'er prairie wastes, and stood
 Where all that God has made, seemed good;
 Where Nature's lavishing hand bestows
 As fair a flower as ever grows,
 And stretched a surface grand and wide,
 And what human needs have been supplied.
 The summer's golden grain now harvested
 And rustling cornfields promising bread!
 Boundless ranges for colts and kine
 Are added gifts from hand Divine:
 Thankless soul arise! Dumb heart pray!
 Behold these blessings on your way,
 So fraught with peace, and free from ills
 But forgive us, if we dream of hills
 Afar away!

Early Birds

They're here in our midst—the early birds of Spring.
 Hopping about, peeping, chirping and warbling;
 Alighting here and there, awake with all their might
 And where—we wonder where they'll choose a building site.
 The red-breast robin continues a low sweet hymn,
 And we think she'll choose for a home, some apple limb
 Where moss will be carried, and dead grass and leaves,
 And thus her home will be sweet in the apple trees:
 Five little white eggs, in time that queen will own—
 Or seven at most all spotted with delicate brown.
 O, right here by my house, my welcome trustful guest,
Please build, (trilling and singing) thy leaf-lined nest;
 Work and whistle among my shrubs—all unafraid
 And offer to us free, a Spring morn serenade.
 O, makers of glad music—ah little preachers too,
 We would that never a woe should come to you!

Free Gifts

My neighbor has a field of clover
 In thrifty nodding flowers;
 And is it strange, such fragrant sweet-
 ness
 Should be so fully ours?
 Now all the cool lanes in the country
 Rampant are, with their wild show!
 They seem the rarest of great gardens—
 Blue and golden, and white as snow.
 And all these, as we pass and re-pass,
 Are ours—yours and mine!
They all are free! God's great handi-
 work—
 With every touch divine!
 O, ours with every sense awake
 To recognize the gift;
 And base the mind that can reject
 A glory thus bequeathed!!

A Little Lesson

A cluster of mints in a quiet pasture grew
 And it flourished and blossomed, yet no one knew
 Until disturbing pressures from a heavy tread
 Trampled rudely down, each lowly little head!
 Then came a delicate sweetness, and no complaint
 Announcing the presence of this fragrant mint.
 Here is a lesson, like a breath from Heaven
 Forgive! forgive! that we may be forgiven.

In Memoriam: J. H.

When clouds around are grim and gray,
And our hearts despond,
How strengthening to see and feel
Illumined rays that sometimes steal
From "silver linings" that reveal
Glories yet beyond.

We knew a worker, true and strong—
Strong in giving,
Who strove to lift, with conscious power
His fellow creatures kindly o'er
Chasms of woe, unto the shore
Of higher living!

But now beyond the things of Earth,
That one is risen!
Whate'er the miracle of dying is—
Whate'er there be in mysteries,
A glorious crown is surely his
In scenes elysian!

'Tears may announce translations
Of the dear departed:
But to the realms supremely blest—
Into peace and everlasting rest
We know that barque has safely passed
With the angel-hearted.

In Memory of J. P. (Of Sterling, Ill.)

One less in the Church militant
Missed from an earnest band
And one more, triumphantly
Safe in the spirit land!

A beautiful gathering home
In close of Time's last stage,
The pangs of every suffering
On earth's great pilgrimage

Thrown aside—the care laid down
And "all is well—right!"
As the passing spirit seeth
In unclouded Sight!

It matters not what tired paths
The faltering footsteps knew,
The crowning of an upright life
Has helped the faithful through.

Under the shade of evergreens
In sweet undying trust,
Is laid the precious clay to rest
Beside its kindred dust!

Twenty years before, and we
(Some now with silvered hair)
Stood here beside his mother's grave:
In silent prayer.

The wildness of the prairie-land
Was full of nature's grace:
And then no fence—no line was drawn
About this burial place:

The youthful city just beyond
In its upspringing stride,
The children of this mother's care
Had welcomed to its side,

And like a portion of its life,
And knitted with its growth
Is he, who's laid this burden down
For an immortal youth!

From different vineyards round about
Our Father's children come
And stand in reverent silence near
A brother's closing tomb!

One less in the militant church
Missed from an earnest band
O, one more, triumphant soul
Safe in the spirit land!

7th Mo., 28th, 1876.

Naaman.

A remarkable story in Scripture
Seemingly illumined in light
Is clothing a pen with expressions--
With beautiful visions, to-night.
'Tis the record of Naaman, a captain
In the martial hosts of the king—
One honored greatly with distinctions
That triumphs in battle may bring.

But above all these worldly illusions,
It seems a little Hebrew slave
Brought unto him a safer glory
Than all his deeds of valor gave!
And Bible records extending onward
As our mental visions rise,
Unveil to us the solemnity
Of her tender pitying eyes—

As she studied so reflectively
The plague upon her master laid!
Which all human healing failed to
reach
Thus saw the captive Hebrew maid.
The mission of her Syrian bondage
Right here transcendantly appears:
Then in wisdom's unselfish pleadings
And tenderness, akin to tears

She speaks! "Would that my lord were
with the prophet—
(A suggestive little prayer)
—With the prophet in Samaria."
Surely there would be healing there!
So he came to Elisha—(this captain)
Came to the prophet, as we read,
Who taught the afflicted Syrian
That the true God—is Lord indeed!

But the prophet's mandates were so simple--
--Simple and so easily tried
That the haughty Naaman despied them
In his weak and worldly pride!
The world still owns lofty minded people
Who might aid any Christian call
Should this come unto them in wonders:
But sometimes such despise the small.
Yet this leper learned an obedience--
Crushed out his needless--helpless pride--
Bathed in the waters of the Jordan
And came forth humbly purified!

Awaken Farmer!

Over the fields, the sunbeams are streaming—
In through windows of sleepers beam-ing
With cheering light;
And on distant plains the fowls are screaming
Awakening toilers sweetly dreaming
 Visions of night.
O, get up busy farmer, 'tis morning;
Dew sparkles in matchless adorning
 Over the plain—
Has fallen in silence without warn-ing,
And even the pastures are turning
 To deeper green.
The skies too are bluer and serener
All the fields are fresher and greener
 Than for many a day:
A thrush is singing—have you seen
 her?
Is caroling anear our window
 And floats away!
There's been a dash through the night
 of showers
Bathing this beautiful land of ours —
 —This bountiful land;
Now where the tenderest of sunlight
 pours
Look out for life in delicate flowers
 On every hand—
Along moist fence-rows, nodding their
 heads
And there are young violets in shelt-ered beds
 Asleep in the grass
Out in the meadows, where their wild
 life spreads:
But the children find them in their
 tramps—their treads
 As they leisurely pass.

They were bringing to us those fresh flowers
All the way in from hedges and bowers--
 Such sweet bouquets!
Dear children of these neighbors of ours
Going before and after the Showers
 To hedges and by-ways!
They knew how we had liked the wild bloomers:
So they picked them, the early con-fers
 On their way to school:
And now right here in quiet offerings
This gratefulness lives for the sweeter things
 That keep life's pathway full!
We ask each year, when the flowers are new
We ask dear friends when we're thinking of you—
 Whether kind thoughts return
What is holier in our checkered lives
Than the help which a loving friend-ship gives
 And no deceit is worn?

A Child Orator.

An audience was expectantly awaiting
 The rehearsal of a child
Who held the hands of loving parents,
 debating,
 Whether he could give delight—
Please an audience that night.
Toward the interesting boy all
 thought seemed drifting
With a wave of interest;
 He stepped briskly to the rostrum,
 then uplifting
(With a start of deep surprise
 At the crowd) his frightened eyes.
'Twas a picture worthy of an artist's
 power—
 Of a writer's graceful pen,
And continues in returning, since that
 hour
 With every outline free,
An offering to memory.
He stood like an orator—his fine eyes
 shining
An unconscious tableau there;
 Then slowly bowing (a shapely head
 inclining)
Burst out sobbing in child alarms
 And rushed back to his father's arms.

Inexperienced children must sometimes falter
In hard tasks before them laid,
Like to us who daily need a holy altar
When heavy our burdens grow
In life's turmoil, sorrow, woe!

A few tender words of whispered comfort spoken
Brought the boy to his feet again,
"If papa will go with me." The spell was broken—
The father drew wisely near—
His boy knew no more of fear.

Ah boy what a lesson from thee are we learning
Studying scenes before us!
Oh all that's for us, let our hearts be discerning!
On life paths, with God's outlining,
May a steadier light be shining!

So that we may live, that a Helper eternal—
—Our Father may be near us!
For lo here is where the light supernal
In the midst of every throng
Makes willing workers strong.

By Their Fruits

Ye shall know them by their fruits:
(St. Matthew—Chapter VII.)
A thorny, cumbrous plum tree holds
A part of our garden ground:
But bye and bye, when bloom unfolds
Scattering sweetness round.
What a vision of beauty, in flaunting white
Will entice the bee in his wandering flight.

And as the varied seasons come
And go right onward from the Spring
There'll come to us the luscious plum
In sun-tingled coloring.
O, thorny tree, we have learned to
know thy fruit
And ask no fairer one as a substitute.
Then child of this life, ponder well!
Profession is only a name:
The deeds we do are what will tell,
No matter what we claim:
Every word and act to the surface brought
Is the ripened fruitage of some latent thought.

Ahasuerus.

Many years ago, in centuries gone
There sat upon the Persian throne
A monarch who in Sacred Writ, is known
As the king, Ahasuerus.

We scan his history, that we may trace
Some great uplift for the human race:
He held the power; but the help and grace

Were Vashti's, Esther's, Mordica's!
The royal palace in its flash of light
Shone, we're told, with gold and silver bright,
And the pavements there were marble
(so they write—)
Were black and red, and blue and white.

But the king sipped with friends from cups of gold
The wine that such in abundance hold,
And like Esau, his blessed chances sold
To inebriant appetite!

Feastings went on, though the Scripture hath said
"Look not on the wine, when it is red"—

Drinking went on as the appetite led
With favored nobles and princes;

That carousal reached to the seventh day,
(So we read) till the wine in its way
Held over the king, a dominant sway
Blunting—enslaving his senses!

He bade to his presence, Vashti, the queen,
That her wonderful beauty be seen—
That she a part of his splendor, his sheen
And his riches, might shine.

But she, with a loftier sense endowed
And perhaps in mortification bowed
Refused to face the maudlin crowd
Drinking! And drunken with wine!

Amongst The Freedmen.

Right here in a land of Free Schools—
These great chances for all in life
Who strive with an honest, earnest
endeaver—
Right here in the midst of all these,
we cannot
Comprehend the dearth of real poverty
Known in the land of oppression
In the midst of mental darkness!

Yet right here in the midst of these,
(Greatest of opportunities)
Many bow to the *habit of drink*, and
bind
Themselves in thraldom, low, degrading
To this master! Thus they ruin and
destroy

Their heaven-born chances in life
And become as fettered slaves!

Wine and Slavery, twin blights! They
Mingle in oppression--in wrong!
A portrayal reaches us from the South-
land,
Fresh from fields where missionaries
are toiling
On for others, that the down-trodden
may rise
And the pitifully blinded
May be aided to see.

This portrayal is of a lad
Born low with those arising now
From Vassalage into Freedom. While
stepping

From the darkness of servitude--slavery
Into the brilliancy of accorded rights,
Many see but dimly at first,
Grasping the precious boon!

'Tis as passing from darkened rooms
Into a great fullness of light:
Can we marvel that unguided brain
and eye
So often fail, and that strong men like
children
Should also (thus blinded) sometimes
trample down
The loveliest buds of promise
In their first unfolding beauty?

The parent of *this lad* saw not
Nor understood yet, the dawning—
The sure, glad in-coming of a new Era
For their people! But this child—this
sable boy

Awakening to his human rights and
needs
And strong in faith, saw wistfully
The ripening harvests ahead!

Catching the Alpha and Omega
From the lips of careless comrades—
The a, b, c, imperfect and uncertain,
Yet nursing in brain the mystic key of
lore
He plants his feet upon the ladder's first
round!

What power now can keep him down?
Neither rags, dirt, nor denials!

Pleadings may die away in air,
Petitions for breadth, be refused—
May though meant in kindness, be re-
fused, denied

And refused and denied too long! The
pleader
Breaks the trammels his restless eager
feet

Bear him on to higher fountains
And to guardianship more healthful.

Now upon the Christian portals
Of the Freedmen's inspiring school
We find this prophetic touching revela-
tion;

The Negro child, dark visaged, gazing
in wonder
Upon one pale brow within, whose word
is law;

And yet the whole band of children
Give willing and loving heed.

He stands irresolute—afraid:
The courage that inspired, is gone!
The sympathetic eyes of the one within
Rest kindly upon this queer apparition
In dirt and rags! Then in broken ex-
pression

Of slave dialect, comical,
Pitiful, a voice begs to enter!

Little freed slave! We recognize
As we gather the whole picture—
Past and present, *the utter desolation*
*Settling like clouds of blight on morn-
ing hours*;

Then as tender plant, hurt, trod on, al-
most killed
He survives, with an upward bound
And turns to the light!

The Teacher's Field.

Yes, 'tis nearly school-time, children—
Our restless little band:

The morning hours are gliding by
As you around us stand;

You came with sweetest offerings—
The sweetest Flora knows,
With fragrant plants from garden beds;
From hedge, the pure wild rose.

Your paths anear the grain fields lay—
Their wealth by wavelets stirred,
And voices blending tenderly
Were all the sounds we heard;
It was good to hear your shouting
And happy prattling talk,
As you, hurrying hither, came
Running too glad to walk—

Running in to meet your teachers
 Whose love you knew you had,
 And ev'ry face was beautiful
 In innocence clad.
 Musing! Soon we thought, the reapers
 Moved on by human skill
 Will slash amidst the waving grain
 And clip the golden frill—

Will mow in long and graceful sweeps
 This nodding headed wheat!
 Teachers have a different field,
 But every class must reap!!
 The school-child's love's a coronal
 For all of us to wear;
 And sowing precious seeds of thought
 Requires a Christian care.

In closing! We'll turn to *Marys*
 Crowding about our feet:
 Of the names to woman given
 None more honored—sweet:
 They are as young and tender vines--
 (Needing a guidance, true!)
 --All these *Marys, Sarahs, Annies,*
 And strong-willed brothers too—

—*These little men*—boys of promise
 So separate in aims,
 And differing in intellect
 As well as christened names.
 One is a Benjamin Franklin--
 And another, a boy
 (As unlike "Old Hickory" though
 As grief contrasts with joy)

Is christened for Andrew Jackson!!
 O in life's destinies
 May he disarm unrighteousness
 With an iron will, like *his!*
 While *this Benjamin Franklin*, with
 No celebrated kite
 To send on message to the clouds
 To catch electric light,
 Has won an honored place right here
 As he with book and slate
 Stepped to his long accustomed seat
 In boyhood's merry gait.

Every school is rich in records—
 Its lights and shadows known:
 And now around these scattered flocks
 Are strong reflections thrown:
 Let Teachers lend assistance timely
 In hope, and love and prayer,
 Remembering the weakest lambs
 Need most a shepherd's care.
 1861.

Oak Tree School.

(In Camden, Delaware)

We see in reminiscent thought—

In visions sweet and true
 The Old Oak Tree—the neat brick walk
 That guideth yet into
 The quiet hall, and then up stairs—
 The latch seems in one's hand:
 But pause! There's been a lapse of
 years!

Ah, can we understand
 That every pupil now within
 To us is new—is strange?
 Then here is where we must begin
 To realize the change!
 'Tis idle to call the sweetly fair,
 In dear and childish grace
 To come to us as though a year
 Had scarcely run its race—
 To look for one familiar smile
 From our own Camden girls--
 For Susan's pleasant ways the while,
 And Annie's sunnycurls—
 For the gay contagious laugh
 Of that once loyal band,
 Though oft it seems in kind behalf
 They yet around us stand.

We've come to see how sadly deep
 The cruelty appears
 Wakening the "seven sleepers" "sleep
 Of near two hundred years!"

Three long decades our records make
 Since we were there in youth—
 And wonderful as we awake
 And realize the truth!
 How can we ever bear to meet
 Changes in the ones we love,
 To find the little racing feet
 In grown-up stations move.—

To find for childhood's careless grace
 (In willful pathways led)
Here now, a woman's thoughtful face
 And sober ways, instead!

Oh can we ever understand
 As we these scenes, recall?
 Would almost ask clairvoyant hand
 To trace the ways of all:
 A few, we've learned, like lillies fair
 In the dew and bloom of life
 Were gathered home from scenes of
 care
 And disturbing strife:

And one, they tell us, wand'ring roams
 In mineral mining, delves:
 Others, (a few) have made them homes
 And joys unto themselves.
 But what of the many—of those
 Of whom we've lost the track?
 The written search light seldom throws,
 Its revelations back!

A Vision.

Watching beside a fevered brow
 On restless pillows tossing,
 I saw (glancing at the stars) how
 The weary night was passing!
 Slumber had found the suffering one
 Ere Sol was fairly risen,
 And I (the watcher's duties done)
 Saw, was it a vision?
 Tranceending every human thought
 With angel presence thrilling,
 And all the space around, about
 The greatest peace was filling!
 All disappointments unextinguished
 Lost every reach of sadness:
 The dearest hopes could be relinquished
 For this celestial gladness —
 For this benediction —lumination rare
 Draught of joy elysian!
 Behold the mental clouds oft called
 Dispair
 Vanished with the vision!

Out in the Country.

We wonder at times what the world is
 doing —
 We who are staying right here
 Watching plants in garden and truck
 patch growing,
 And the blossoms around us sweetly
 blowing
 In the Spring of the year.
 We trace colors on wings (beautiful
 pinions)
 In the families of birds;
 We investigate nests, and bird compan-
 ions
 With healthful interests, in these dom-
 inions
 So unlearned in words.
 Often we pause in the summer's unrests
 Just to listen to a dove!
 Oh is every home what wisdom invests
 As full of joy as the robin redbreast's
 In unfaltering love?
 Many a life like our own, in this quiet
 Is peacefully passing along
 Untouched by the noise—the madden-
 ing riot—
 Untouched by the wild tumultuous spirit
 Of the restless throng.
 We love the sweetness of our seclusions
 Amid meadows and lanes.
 Partially free from outside intrusions
 That wreck the mind with heartless
 delusions
 And mental strains!

A Valentine.

'Tis near the eve of Valentine's —
 Already Cupid sings;
 In sentimental modest shrines
 We seem to hear the wings
 Of angels flying to and fro
 With messages so sweet,
 We long and love to see them go
 And come as friendships meet.
 They will bear from east to the west —
 From farm to town, forsooth
 What oft before hath been expressed —
 A sweet continued truth!
 And as ye fly, bright angels, oh,
 Upon your joyous way
 Some one will send a billet doux
 With words such only say.
 But *scorn a comic libel* passed
 For so sweet a flower:
 No bitterness in language dressed
 These dainty notes should mar!
 That is all. Fly on—serenely on
 With tender loving lines,
 And let the breath of truth be borne
 In scattering Valentines.

Unread Chapters.

Children are running by from school
 In skip and shout and play;
 And now their noisy nonsense
 We're stopping to survey.
 We too, a worn out schedule hold,
 Each name once more, let's note
 And gather up the threads of life
 As they before us float!
 One name recalls a winsome face,
 How oft we've thought of her;
 But now her happy laughing life
 Like school day dream, is o'er!
 She went away in girlhood bloom.
 A vision of surprise
 While sunshine of approaching years
 Seemed sparkling in her eyes.
 A little way she trod these paths —
 A few short years at best
 Then chose a Kansas pioneer
 And moved with him 'out west'
 Whether her life were sad or sweet
 No line or word reveals,
 The most of it to us seems like
 A book with *seven seals*!
 Except that from that western land
 Where she a home had sought
 Back to the old ancestral roof
 A motherless babe was brought!
 One broken seal! How short that life
 And yet perhaps 'twas long
 In pages finely written o'er
 In pleasant scenes among.

Days short and sweet in life may be
 Most charming, happy, true—
 Hold more than long and trivial years
 With *noughts* running through!
 So let those chapters be unread
 And all the dreams unknown
 Of this one flower of the Spring
 Culled ere fully blown!

The Pearl of Great Price.

I thought of the fashion prevailing
 In descriptions of gowns—
 The festooning, frilling and trailing,
 And the twinkling with stones.
 But *our* gems are dew-drops on glumes
 Of this blossoming grass;
 While fruits and grains are gladdening
 homes
 --Enhancing loveliness.
 There's the rubicelle, amethyst, pearl
 In each lapidist's show--
 There is sapphire, emerald, beryl
 That scintillate and glow.
 But Time's too precious to be wasted
 here
 Too long on things like these:
 The world needs workers afar and near
 In its philanthropies—
 Calling into light from ways of sin,
 And helping weak mankind!
 The gem of value, that I would win
 Is perfect peace of mind.

The Sarah Levinia.

On the banks of the peaceful Delaware—
 —The beautiful Delaware bay,
 Sat once, a restful company, watching
 The shimmering of waves at play.
 The gentlest billows rolling and tossing
 In their ebb and flow all day.
 Sea gulls, silent, came down in the sun-
 shine
 With wings white and gray, spreading wide,
 And vessels moved onward to the ocean
 On breast of the moving tide,
 So airily and gallantly sailing
 As though touched with human pride.
 A few years before, a new-rigged vessel
 Came glancing and floating along,
 While upon its star-board, or frontal bar
 Plain and unmistakably strong
 Was printed clearly "The Sarah
 Levinia"
 Untold and unsung in song.

But it unfolds a touching history
 A history enwreathed in charms
 For while the schooner was being
 builded,
 Its owner, through calm and storm,
 As he came overseeing the workmen
 Carried in his loving arms
 His beautiful and interesting baby —
 A delicate blue-eyed one,
 And as she came in amidst the builders,
 Screened from harsh breezes and the
 sun,
 They strove each for her merry endearments
 So tenderly begun.
 Now when the vessel had reached its
 finishings
 Then the workmen in one acclaim
 Declared the schooner which they had
 builded
 Should wear the baby's name,
 And in its launching were heard their
 voices
 This kind decree, proclaim.
 So "The Sarah Levinia" (that vessel)
 In commerce plowed its way,
 While the maiden grew on to woman-
 hood
 Holding—wielding her sway:
 And these lines on the shrine of affection
 As an offering I lay.

Virginia.

We will call this babe Virginia—
 This tiny blue-eyed one,
 A child without a record in
 Her journey just begun!
 We'll name her our Virginia—
 Ours in memory sweet
 Of as lovely, loving a child
 As e'er in life we meet—
 —One whose pure attractive childhood
 So often we recall,
 Ready to dispense a kindness
 With kindly cheer for all:
 Would that there were more such
 children
 In all our homes astir.
 So this one we'll name Virginia
 In memory of her.
 Yes, of her whose eyes were love—
 A dower of ebon hue,
 Black as a raven's glossy wings;
 This little one's are blue!
 Though we call this child Virginia
 Yet we cannot dower
 These eyes with the same magnetic
 And loving power.

We are watching with the parents
 In deep solicitude
 All the wonderful unfoldings
 Of a human bud!
 We believe in the expressions
 That mark the human brow,
 And in *tones* that may be copied
 With an influence now.

These may return in premiums
 Of joyfulness complete--
 May come laden back to parents
 Refreshing--even sweet!
 O, blessed are the attributes
 Of filial kindness--true!
 These fill children's eyes with beauty
 Whether black or blue!

A Comet.

Stay friends; do not sleep so early
 This calm and starry night—
 Cast aside the spell of slumber
 And catch a wondrous sight!
 There's a stranger in the heavens
 With his luminous train
 Following a northward pathway
 Where constellations reign!
 There is Lyra in the zenith
 In unmeasured heights:
 And Pleiades in splendor now
 Hangs out her fretted lights;
 While our own wandering planets
 Revolving in the sky
 Are casting lines of beauty down
 For every watching eye.

But here's a stranger—new-comer,
 A mystic thing outright,
 Sweeping the very firmament
 Upon the wings of night.
 He may travel on and onward
 A thousand years or more
 Ere he returns to Earth's blue skies—
 This wondrous visitor.

What brings him hither—his mission?
 A marvelous surprise!
 Arresting oh, the attention
 Of our startled eyes!
 Astrologer! does he portend
 Some evil for the Earth?
 Does that stern stranger in the sky
 Approach with breath of wrath?
 Much is learned and much unknown
 Of things right here below:
 Wisdom Supreme will grant the Light
 For all we ought to know!

Sharon.

On Sharon's tan-walks we bade to each
 adieu
 (Our dear alumni in an eastern school)
 Planning to meet again in a year or two:
 Our aspirations and dreamings beautiful
 But the wheels of Time are changeable!
 Now here in the closing of the fourth
 decade
 Since parting then at dear old Sharon's
 door,
 With all our varied burdens measured
 —weighed
 Two of us meet for the first, once more—
 Forty years of interval—two score!
 We meet in the *west*—a surprise to us
 both,
 And wonderfully changed in counte-
 nance;
 Yet Margaret's dark eyes, hold as in
 youth
 A depth of power from inheritance,
 And magnetic in every glance.
 What'er these years have brought to
 us, or taken—
 Wrenched from our lives, or added to,
 Whatever surface friends have long
 forsaken
 Or which throughout have proven true,
 All are settled now, and in review—
 We find the jewels of most enduring
 worth,
 Of priceless value unto all,
 Are the deeds of kindness, of forbear-
 ance—truth
 A clearer faith in life that's spiritual,
 A help and strength that cannot fail.

1893

A Bird in Winter.

'Twas a jay at noon that caught our
 view,
 Lazily afloat in air:
 Its life seemed linked with the misty
 blue:
 Our interests awoke, afresh, anew
 As we traced its pathway there.
 But what sent it thus abroad to-day—
 This lone bird of graceful wing?
 Was it to foreknow in its instinct way—
 To detect as the early robin may
 A sign of the far-off Spring?

More likely to fathom sounds of storm
 By our dull ears unheard,
 A kind of signal service, or alarm
 That protects most wisely from threat-
 ened harm
 The little winter bird.

Years.

How short the years seem now, and on
and on,
In sure processions go—
Planting about our temples, one by one,
Threads as white as snow!

What though we tread more slowly now
this year—
Tread leisurely along?
The push of business life afar and near
Should hold the young and strong:

But we have won the right to see ahead,
Through long experience—
Gained a higher niche for each silver
thread
In paths where we advance;

And we have won the light to see just
where
The poor *neglectives* stand—
How they're blinded by the delusive
glare
In the Deceiver's hand!

But here and there in life—above the
throng
Are sure to climb the best of all!
And these years and years as they glide
along
Will place the coronal.

In Time of Drouth.

Where is the rain cloud
While nature is suffering with thirst?
Heavy with dust, the leaves:
The stunted buds refuse to burst—
The rain-dove vainly grieves!

Oh rain-cloud!
The maple lifts her little palms
Beseechingly on high:
No answer from the blue dome
comes—
No soothing sounds reply.

Rain, rain cloud,
The hot dry earth is cracked in seams
Like fevered parching lips;
And slower glide the shallow streams
From which the wild bird sips.

O, listen! Hearken!!
There is a blissful, blissful sound
Splashing the window pane;
Give thanks faint heart, give thanks
profound
For, this the later rain!

On the Parable of the Sower.

The thought that's *cherished* will thrive
and grow
And blossom into deeds!
Let us watch the gardens which we sow
That nothing vile be creeping through
Out choking precious seed!

Kept in off the Streets.

It was only a sand-box, broad and long,
Partly filled with clean white sand,
So clean that it need not soil or stain
The whitest little hand.
A father placed it where his two young
sons
Were allowed all day to roam:
Bringing thus a sort of sea-side beach
Anear their cozy home.
And like a bounding step on the Sea-
shore
A dream of the sea—the sea,
Was this delving—tumbling of children
Happy as childhood could be.
The passers, passing, must surely have
paused
As thoughtful people do,
To notice this innocent rollicking
sport
And unendingly new,
Whereby these children detained at
home
In a sensible beautiful way,
Were thus kept from th' street's rough
training
In safe contented play.

A Ramble.

We see today through restful eyes—
Through glad and blessed vision,
Dissolving views across the skies
From zenith to horizon.
We see new prospects everywhere
Enrolled—enwreathed 'n splendor:
And we enjoy our leisure rare
'Mid woodland blossoms, tender.
A flower belated in the bud
Is wondrously expanding,
Leading to kindoms ever good
To human understanding.

We're free to-day from worries laid
In hurried life's existence,
And yet we hear the hum of trade
Through all this pleasant distance.

Let's leave for once, all care behind
As though its clamors cease;
Enjoy to-day, an unburdened mind—
A true and holy peace,

The Roadside Daisy.

It lives where much that's loved, would die,
By culture's hand unled;
Though crushed by feet that pass it by,
It lifts a bruised head!
'Twill rise again—its life resume—
Put forth its blossoms fair
'Twill rise, and live, and bud and bloom
Unknown to tender care.
Can we not learn from Flora's gifts—
Her bright neglected plants,
To find the strength that yet uplifts
Through all discouragements?

Chrysanthemum.

Awake with the sweet and breezy Spring
In her crowning and her blossoming:
But this one poor plant's uninteresting!
And awake too, through summery hours
But seemingly sleeping, with powers
Dormant in the season of flowers.
Now Autumn is here; her caressing
Is frost over plant life pressing
A new and wonderful dressing.

Sweetly scented petals, dewy and tender
Have wilted—perished like twigs on
the fender
But *crysanthemum is rising in splendor!*
Then Spirit, oh soul in a living hunger
Succumb to discouragements, frowns no longer;
The frail reed may bend, but its life is stronger.

Tread the paths quietly, where duty calleth;
Every cloud may pass, that now appal-
leth;
Gather brightness where'er the sun-
beam falleth.

Outlooks may seem hopeless in life-
time's Spring,
But oft wonderful is the awakening
Of sleeping powers, that bitter trials
bring!

Charms of Winter in the Country.

Not the dreary coldness
Not the driving blast,
But the snowy mantle
When the night storm's passed —
The soft and snowy mantle, found
With drooping twigs all wet,
And all the heavy plumes around
With myriad star-gems set.
Not the cheerless portal,
Not the fireless hearth,
But the blessed households
Rich in hope and mirth!
Snow Flake, hang up thy crystals —blaze
Reflected beauty's shown
In answer to the sun's first rays
Sent from the golden throne!
Not the boisterous voices
Not the ribald tongue,
But the deep inquirings—
Minds awake and young
Asking concerning silences
So rapt and deeply still—
The meaning of the mysteries
That seem all space to fill!
Not the noise of cities
Not the rush on streets
But the daily interests
The quiet country keeps;
And may it keep in usefulness
The life it cradles here,
To grow, expand, to help—to bless
All life within its sphere!

Tennyson And His Young Niece.

Agnes Grace Weld, niece of the English poet, gives in a small book an account of her uncle's religious belief in which these words occur: "God is with us now on this down as we are walking together." I said to him (writes the author of the booklet) that I thought such a near actual presence would be awful to most people. The uncle in his answer said: "I should be sorely afraid to live my life without God's presence: but to feel that he is by my side now just as you are, is the joy of my heart."

"I'd sorely fear to live my life" from
God apart
In passing through the scenes of Time!
To know that God is near "is the joy
of my heart."
Tennyson's words are here, sublime,

For what could this existence without
a Savior be;
A maze of wretched solitude—
Oh like helpless boats adrift, on the
stormy sea,
With none to help—no Savior, God!
But joy, joy to feel an all-living Pres-
ence near
Directing in our doubt, *the way!*
And although our lot most humble may
appear,
It is grand—great, *as we obey!*

Thankfulness.

We were glad when the scent of our
orchard blossoming
Crept in at our open doors,
While we strolled around restfully,
noticing
The first faint glow of stars.
And glad we can see from our grounds,
the coloring
Of the sunset sky at night,
When the soft warm air is sweet—all
things hallowing
Our hearts in hushed delight.
And glad we enjoy so fully the surround-
ings,
Enlightened by nature's hand,
In the grace of promising crops abund-
ing
For minds that understand.
Thankful too that clouds of pain have
vanished
As chaff from winnowing east:
And the weary sleepless watching
banished—
Replaced by unburdened rest.
Thankful for the care of a bountiful Giver
In whose love our lives flow on,
Approaching a likeness to the peaceful
river
Within a garden beyond.

Let the Baby Sleep.

Let the winsome sleeping baby rest
His little dimpled hands softly pressed
About his gently heaving breast,
Innocent as any rose unblown.
He needs deepest love that parents know
And the tenderest they can bestow
Since he will surely grow and grow
Through influences around him thrown!

Then ere he attains to man's estate
Remove glaring pitfalls, small and
great—
Remove them ere it be too late
Your child of promise to protect!
Remove the saloons that so entice
That lead the young to wrong—to vice!
Beside his cradle, take your choice
A good man, or one in bar-rooms
wrecked!

Sweet Pea Blossoms.

"I'll name my favorite flowers:
(We listened to a childish voice)
Pansies in loveliest colors
Are always my choice."
"Not mine (the voice of another)
Mine is the fresh bud of a rose."
Thus archly, sister and brother,
Each, a favorite chose.
Further on, a shaded border
Evolved sweet clambering peas,
Dispensing nectareous odor
Stirred by the wings of the bees.
Perfection, though terrestrial
Seemed in all the petals born,
Emblems of types celestial
In humble glory worn.
And here the ethereal essence
With its elevating powers
Led the children to a presence
Of love for *all* the flowers.

Robin.

Listen! 'tis a robin's power
In this blessed morning hour.
Calling to her own!
Yet others than her tender brood
Are listening with heart subdued—
Others than her own—
Since human ear hath caught the sound
Floating on the air around—
Melody of love!
And we join in, and soul's uprise
Mingling reverent prayer with praise
To Infinite Love!

Interpret true, these tender songs
Where grace ineffable belongs.
And enjoyment—joy:
Only a little bird, yet hear—!
Gladness floats to the Eternal Ear--
Enraptured joy.

The nest may be on an apple limb
But onward floats a warbler's hymn,
 And heed farmer, heed.
Harm not the bird, nor mud-lined nest
For she's our friend,* be this impressed,
 The farmer's friend indeed.

* By actual observation it is learned
that a robin in feeding her young con-
sumed in one week 1000 cut worms.

The Flicker.

(Golden-winged woodpecker.)

Written for the children learning about birds.

What sort of a carpenter is there
 Hammering, hammering away
Just on the outside of our windows
 And just at the peep of day?

He's up in the eaves of the house:
 What sort o' a hammer has he?
Get up children, awaken, awaken—
 Quietly—Let's see.

It's the flicker; we've caught him;
 He never has driven a nail!
A funny little carpenter, surely,
 And that hammer's his bill.

Phoebe.

"Twitter, twitter" 'Tis five o'clock,
Do you hear the matinee?
And the chorus grows much sweeter
 "Phoebe, peewee, peewee."

Aslant from the sun there creeps a gold-
en beam:
And the fluttering of leaflets now is seen
Where this vision of beauty is quiver-
ing in,
 "Phoebe, peewee, peewee."

That little dream of air that scarcely
blew
Has touched a bursting rose-bud washed
 in dew:
O loveliest morn! Is Time born anew?
 "Phoebe, peewee."

Thus purely and sweetly dawns this day,
 that stirs
The sleepy little birds, (my choristers)
With a benediction unto her that hears,
 "Phoebe, peewee."

The Blue Jay.

Our great blue jay, with an easy swing
Floats out from the cedar's covering:
Through the orchard and about the yard
There flies no brighter -more noticed
bird:

Such a sweeping of blue as he flies—
Such a tint of summery skies.

But his music! That is coarse we own—
No tenderness in his garrulous tone
Not one plain little warbler, we note
Would change its voice for a blue jay's
coat.

Its song is a bird's sweet dower,
Like scent is the charm of a flower.

Instruction is here for us who would
learn

These lessons of value to discern—
To understand beyond first sight
The revelations of a latent light,
 For beauty may not always grace
The dearest and the sweetest face,

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